

We have an obligation to leave for future generations the very basics of human life on Earth; clean air, pure water, unpoisoned land.

Senator George J. Mitchell, October 6, 2000

**USGS Water Resources
Research Institute for Maine**

John Peckenham, Interim Director

The Mitchell Center has a history of leadership, excellence, and growth in the area of environmental research. The Center continues to build on its reputation by staying at the forefront of environmental technology and natural resource protection, generating key data to inform state and national policy-makers, and expanding on its many educational and outreach activities.

MITCHELL CENTER GOALS

- Expanding research infrastructure to stay at the forefront of environmental technology
- Facilitating interdisciplinary research and education
- Creating job opportunities for water research professionals
- Strengthening public outreach and improving K-16 education for students, teachers and citizens

RESEARCH

The Mitchell Center has attracted more than \$17 million in external research funding. Projects include:

- Trends in surface water chemistry in salmon rivers



- Source water protection for public water supplies — disinfection by-products; source water analysis and warning technology
- PEARL - a web-based forum for serving data and information relating to Maine's natural resources
- Impacts of gravel mining on groundwater
- Effects of traffic on water quality in Acadia National Park (ANP)
- Mapping atmospheric mercury and sulfate deposition in ANP
- Characterizing effluent flows from biosolids stockpiles
- Water resources and climate change
- Long term acid rain monitoring

EDUCATION

Higher Education — The Mitchell Center offers a Water Resources option for graduate students. Graduate students conducting research often work with state and federal agencies or water stewardship groups. Student research topics include: Monitoring pesticide levels in Downeast rivers; evaluating stream chemistry response to acidification and recovery from acidification; periphytic algae as an indicator of nutrient loading to the Meduxnekeag River.

Education — Maine youth and their teachers benefit from hands-on water-related outreach activities such as Water Education for Teachers, Maine Children's Water Festival, Penobscot River Keepers and floating classrooms.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Policy — Participation on boards and committees to inform policymakers at state and national levels. Preparation of a credible, independent, peer-reviewed technical analysis to



provide answers to public policy questions on the use of biosolids in Maine.

Public Outreach — The Mitchell Center continues to support environmental stewardship and education through programs like PEARL (www.pearl.maine.edu).

New publications for 2004/05 include:

- Arsenic in Maine Groundwater: Guidance for Small Water Systems;
- Field Guide to Aquatic Phenomena;
- The Effects of the 2001-02 Drought on Maine Drinking Water Supplies;
- Waterlines - the Center's newsletter.

All documents are available in web and print format.

The Center sponsors many other outreach initiatives, including the Penobscot Synthesis and the annual Maine Water Conference.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnership with external organizations is central to accomplishing the Center's goals. Current partners include five federal agencies, seven state agencies, and 14 non-government organizations.

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